

Message Text

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PAGE 01 KINGST 03323 172209Z
ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 MCT-01 HA-05 AID-05 CCO-00
FBOE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSC-05 SP-02
OC-06 OPR-02 PA-01 USSS-00 CA-01 A-01 SCS-06
OMB-01 SS-15 SY-05 SSO-00 NSCE-00 ICAE-00 INRE-00
CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-08 LAB-04 NSAE-00 SIL-01 /115 W
-----050138 172216Z /64

O R 172110Z APR 78
FM AMEMBASSY KINGSTON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 724
INFO COMNAVBASE GUANTANAMO BAY IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN
AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN
USINT HAVANA
AMEMBASSY NASSAU
AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN
AMCONSUL VANCOUVER

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE KINGSTON 3323

VANCOUVER PLEASE PASS TO USIDB DELEGATION

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINS, JM
SUBJECT: CIVIL UNREST IN KINGSTON

1. A PEACEFUL DEMONSTRATION THIS MORNING BY ABOUT 400 IMPACT WORKERS ERUPTED INTO VIOLENCE ABOUT 1030 HOURS THIS MORNING, BUT AS OF 1500 HOURS IS NOW UNDER CONTROL. FOUR LOOTERS WERE SHOT DEAD BY POLICE AND ABOUT 6 MORE INJURED. TWO POLICEMEN WERE SHOT. SHOPS WERE BROKEN INTO. SEVENTEEN PUBLIC BUSES WERE DAMAGED AND AN ADDITIONAL SEVEN STOLEN. HELICOPTERS, THE JDF, AND A WELCOME SUDDEN DOWNPOUR HELPED LOCAL POLICE BRING DISTURBANCE TO AN END.

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2. AT NOON, WHEN DISTURBANCE WAS AT ITS HEIGHT, POLICE ADVISED BUSINESSES, BANKS, SCHOOLS, GOVERNMENT OFFICES, AND EMBASSIES IN THE NEW KINGSTON, DOWNTOWN KINGSTON, WEST KINGSTON, AND WATERFRONT AREAS TO CLOSE. UPON ADVICE OF POLICE OUR CONSULATE HAS ALSO CLOSED. SINCE OUR EMBASSY (MUTUAL LIFE BUILDING) WAS IN LINE OF MARCH OF DEMONSTRATORS WHO WERE HEADING FOR JAMAICA HOUSE (PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE),

AMBASSADOR LEFT OPTION OF LEAVING TO INDIVIDUAL EMPLOYEES.
ALL AMERICANS HAVE CHOSEN TO REMAIN AND ABOUT HALF THE
NUMBER OF LOCAL EMPLOYEES;PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION HAS
ALSO CEASED. RADIO HAS ANNOUNCED ALL ROADS TO SUBURBS
ARE CLOGGED.

3. IMPACT WORKERS ARE UNSKILLED AND OTHERWISE UNEMPLOYED
LABORERS PUT TO WORK BY THE CITY IN CLEANING STREETS,
PERFORMING MINOR ROAD REPAIRS, ETC.

4. COMMENT: (BEGIN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE) NO ONE IS YET
SURE OF THE REASONS FOR THE DISTURBANCE. THERE ARE FOUR
THEORIES: (A) IMPACT WORKERS WERE DISSATISFIED WITH
WORKING CONDITIONS; IN GENERAL; (B) CITY'S IMPACT WORK
PROGRAM NOT LARGE ENOUGH; ALSO, THERE WAS TALK OF ITS CURTAILMENT
OR DISCONTINUANCE;
(C) WORKERS DISSATISFIED WITH CONDITION OF
SPECIFIC ROADS ON WHICH THEY WERE WORKING; AND (D) POLITICALLY
MOTIVATED. LATTER THEORY ARISES FROM
FACT THAT MOST OF THE DEMONSTRATORS WERE FROM THE JLP
SECTION OF WEST KINGSTON. THERE IS AN ALLEGATION THAT
PNP SUPPORTERS FROM ANOTHER SECTION OF CITY CONFRONTED
THE JLP DEMONSTRATORS AND SOMEONE FIRED A SHOT.
IRVING

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